



**Persatuan Pengguna Pulau Pinang**  
**Consumers Association of Penang**  
**檳城消費人協會 பிளாங்கு பயனீட்டாளர் சங்கம்**

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**Press Statement**

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**Ensure proposals in MTR are implemented**

Consumers Association of Penang welcomes the proposals in the Mid-Term Review (MTR) of the 12th Malaysia Plan to promote economic prosperity, wipe out core poverty, fight corruption, improve the quality of life of our people, and address the climate crisis.

The plan will remain only a plan unless it is implemented efficiently and effectively to achieve the desired outcomes. It is encouraging that, unlike previous Malaysia Plans, the MTR provides for a special committee to be set up to monitor the implementation and to identify the obstacles to achieving the MTR targets.

The resources allocated under the MTR to upgrade 1200 dilapidated public clinics will benefit many in the lower income group who cannot afford treatment in private clinics and hospitals. Increased funds should be allocated for public healthcare to improve the facilities in the public hospitals and clinics, which serve the vast majority of our population. Disease prevention must be given high priority through conducting education programmes and effective campaigns to promote healthy living.

Food security is becoming a critical global issue and MTR has placed agriculture and agro-based industries among the five high-growth high-value sectors. This is a wise move, as in the past, food agriculture had a low priority. Malaysia is over dependent on food imports and this must be corrected to become largely food self-sufficient. The authorities should provide incentives to young people, particularly agriculture graduates, to take up farming and introduce innovations to upgrade farm productivity. Organic agriculture and urban agriculture must be promoted to meet our needs for food. Farmer's cooperatives can be set up in towns to market the farmers' produce without going through middlemen and provide cheaper food to consumers.

Housing is a major problem, particularly in the larger towns. The MTR goal of providing 500,000 homes within reach is commendable as a short-term measure. We need a housing policy that places primary responsibility on the government to provide housing, a basic need. The current policy of giving state and federal lands to private developers under joint-venture agreements to build mostly expensive houses and condos for the rich must be stopped.

A National Housing Board should be set up to develop housing and business units to sell or rent. It should prioritise social housing and rental units, especially for the lower income groups, homeless and workers who come to city centres to seek employment. It should develop housing on state and federal lands and those lands belonging to Public Authorities. These lands should not be given or sold to private developers for any purpose. It can also acquire land for social housing and develop Land Banks for housing throughout the country.

On the climate crisis MTR's adoption of the national adaptation plan to address its impacts is commendable but long overdue. The government must allocate enough funds for mitigation and adaptation measures. There

must be no deforestation and development on fragile hill slopes and highlands. All proposals for coastal and sea reclamation activities in Malaysia, especially the Penang South Reclamation project planned by the Penang state government, must be rejected. Only reclamation activities for essential public services should be allowed. Degraded coastal areas ought to be rehabilitated with suitable tree species.

We need to stop corruption and promote good governance, transparency, accountability, and integrity at all levels. In this regard, MTR's proposal to reform governance focusing on anti-graft laws and government procurement based on competitive and open tenders could help to reduce corruption and leakages of funds meant for public projects. The authorities must ensure the protection of Whistleblowers who are needed to safeguard public interest and promote a culture of public accountability and integrity. Money parked in tax heavens under anonymous accounts must be brought back and those sending the money made accountable.

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